

### Housing



## UNECE finalizes research mission in Uzbekistan to prepare country profile on housing and land management

Due to rapid population growth, Uzbekistan faces challenges in the provision of housing and infrastructure. With about half of Uzbekistan's population living in rural areas, the development and the improvement of rural living standards is particularly important. In order to address the situation, in 2009 the Government launched a targeted State programme of individual housing construction in rural areas. From 2009 to 2013 more than 900 new rural residential areas were built in 159 rural areas of the country. More than 33.5 thousand individual houses with a total area of 4.5 million square metres were built as well as 730 km of paved roads, and more than 800 objects of social, industrial and market infrastructure were constructed in rural areas.

The Government of Uzbekistan considers housing construction in the country a priority that will require both short and long-term attention and aims to further develop its long-term strategy for enhancing housing development, especially in rural areas. To this end, the Government requested the preparation of a country profile on housing and land management from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

The preparation of country profiles is a flagship activity of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. These studies provide tools for governments to use in analysing their policies and strategies on housing, urban development and land management, as well as the institutional and financial frameworks for these sectors.

On the invitation of the Government of Uzbekistan, the UNECE secretariat conducted a preliminary mission to Uzbekistan on 24-26 February 2014. Based on results of the discussions during this preliminary mission, the structure of the country profile that will be prepared for Uzbekistan has been finalized.

As part of the preparatory work for the Country Profile study, the Government of Uzbekistan, represented by the Ministry of Economy, has set up a high level Interagency Working Group to coordinate and supervise the preparation of the study; as well as a team of national experts who will assist the international team of experts in elaborating the study through provision of information.

To establish the basis for cooperation on the country profile, the Ministry of Economy, UNECE and UNDP signed a Memorandum of Understanding which provides the framework for cooperation needed in order to facilitate collaboration during the preparation of the profile.

Further, on 12-13 June, the Ministry of Economy of Uzbekistan, the UNECE, the World Bank and UNDP Uzbekistan organized a [high-level workshop "Approaches and best practices for housing, urban development and land use"](#) in Tashkent where international and national experts and high-level representatives of the Government have discussed approaches to and practices in housing construction, urban planning and land administration in Uzbekistan and in the UNECE region.

Directly after the workshop, a week-long research mission of UNECE international experts started. These experts will work together with Uzbek national experts on the preparation of the country profile study. The outcome of this cooperative work will be presented at the 75th session of the Committee on Housing and Land management in October 2014. □

For more information, please Visit:

<http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/areas-of-work/country-profiles-on-housing-and-land-management.html>

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### Sustainable Development



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## UN System in Europe and Central Asia further intensifies cooperation on the post-2015 development agenda and other cross-cutting issues

The UN entities active in Europe and Central Asia will continue and deepen their cooperation on critical issues such as the post-2015 development agenda. This was agreed at the regular meeting of the Regional Cooperation Mechanism (RCM), held on 16 June and hosted by the UNEP Regional Office for Europe in the International Environment House in Geneva. The meeting was chaired by UNECE and, as per usual practice, held back to back with the meeting of the regional UN Development Group in order to harness synergies between the policy work at the regional level and the operational activities at the country level.

Regional Directors from over a dozen UN entities shared the view that inter-agency cooperation is essential to tackle the cross-cutting and complex challenges the countries in the region are facing in moving towards more inclusive and sustainable societies. Working together across different mandates and institutional structures will likely become even more important in the future, for instance in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In a joint effort of RCM and UNDG, regional priorities for the post-2015 development agenda had been discussed and formulated previously as a contribution to the global negotiation process of Member States (see <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/EuropeCentralAsia>).

As an important ongoing activity, the meeting discussed a draft report on lessons on monitoring and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the region for the post-2015 agenda. Based on five illustrative case studies from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro and Ukraine, the report draws a number of conclusions from the specific experience of this region that could inform the design of the post-2015 agenda. This includes areas such as nationalization and disaggregation of goals and targets, statistical capacity-building, alignment of goals, targets and indicators, and inclusion of new sources of data.

The RCM meeting also addressed two very significant cross-cutting issues: gender equality and health.

The year 2015 will mark the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. As part of the global Beijing+20 review that will be carried out, UNECE is undertaking a regional review, culminating in an intergovernmental meeting on 6 and 7 November 2014 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. UNECE invited all RCM members concerned to engage in the preparations of the review meeting, and several agencies committed to contribute on substantive and organizational matters.

The WHO Regional Office for Europe proposed to establish a working group of the RCM on social determinants of health and noncommunicable diseases. This group would bring together expertise of different agencies on those issues, exchange information and develop joint solutions and policies to support governments in improving health outcomes in the region.

The next meeting of the RCM will take place in November 2014. □

## Forests



## Announcing Silva2015 and the third European Forest Week

At Metsä2013, the joint session of the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC), which took place in Rovaniemi, Finland, in December 2013, Switzerland offered to host the next joint session of COFFI and EFC. Silva2015, the 72<sup>nd</sup> joint session of the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission, will be held in the town of Engelberg, in the Swiss mountains, from 2 to 6 November 2015.

This event will take place in conjunction with the third European Forest Week, which will be a unique occasion to promote the sustainable management and wellbeing of forest in the ECE region and the growing role of forests and forest products in the bio-based economy.

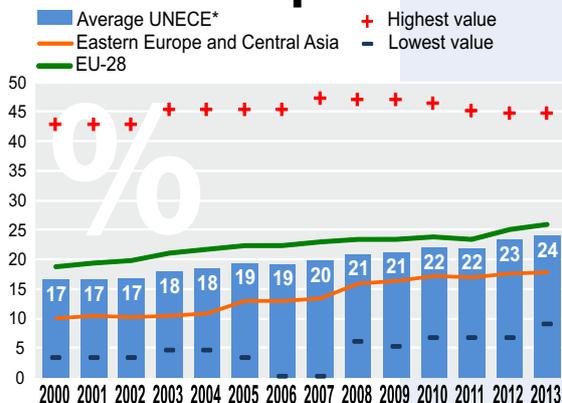
The host town, Engelberg (Mountain of Angels), placed in the Oberwalden canton, in central Switzerland, is surrounded by steep mountains and well protected by alpine forests, providing the perfect scenery to celebrate the 2015 European Forest Week.

See you in Engelberg, from 2 to 6 November 2015, for the 72<sup>nd</sup> joint session of the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission, and for the third European Forest Week. □

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## Facts and Figures

### Share of women in national parliaments



\*Data refer to 50 UNECE countries until 2005 and 52 countries from 2006 onwards. Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco and San Marino are not included.

## Slow but steady growth in female share of parliamentarians

The representation of women in national parliaments is an important aspect in measuring women's position in political decision-making. The UNECE region as a whole has seen a steady increase in the share of females in national parliaments, rising from an average of 17% in 2000 to 24% in 2013.

In 2013, the average female share of parliamentarians was 26% in countries of the European Union and 18% in countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The highest women's representation was in Sweden (45%) and the lowest in Hungary (9%). Since 2000, the greatest increases in UNECE countries were in Serbia, Slovenia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Belarus, which have increased women's representation by more than 22 percentage points each.

Despite the positive trends in recent years, UNECE countries are still far from achieving equal representation of women and men in national parliaments. In 2013, women accounted for less than one quarter of all parliamentarians in the region. In the last 13 years, none of the UNECE countries has reached the 50 per cent mark for female parliamentarians. The Nordic countries Sweden, Finland and Iceland are closest to that benchmark.

The proportion of women in national parliaments is low taking into account that women in our region represent nearly half of the labour force and account for more than half of the tertiary level graduates in most UNECE countries. □

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